

## Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 277676 ACTION MOSCOW 19 DEC 74

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TAGS: OGEN, US, UR

SUBJECT: TRANSCRIPT OF DEPARTMENT NEWS BRIEFING

FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF DEPARTMENT NEWS BRIEFING,  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1974 4:10 PM:

BEGIN TEXT

MR. ANDERSON: I HAVE A BRIEF STATEMENT TO GIVE YOU.

THE PRIVATE COMMUNICATION FROM FOREIGN MINISTER  
GROMYKO TO SECRETARY KISSINGER OF OCTOBER 26, WHICH WAS  
PUBLISHED BY TASS TODAY, DOES NOT IN OUR VIEW CHANGE THE  
UNDERSTANDINGS REFERRED TO IN THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO  
SENATOR JACKSON OF OCTOBER 18.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ALWAYS MADE CLEAR -- MOST  
RECENTLY IN SECRETARY KISSINGER'S TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE ON THE TRADE BILL -- THAT THERE EXISTS  
NO UNDERSTANDING OR AGREEMENT EITHER WITH THE SOVIET  
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GOVERNMENT OR WITH SENATOR JACKSON CONCERNING NUMBERS OF

EMIGRANTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

THAT'S THE END OF THE STATEMENT.

Q. BOB, WAS THE LETTER RELEASED WITH THE  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT?

A. NO, IT WAS NOT.

Q. CAME AS A SURPRISE?

A. YES.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECULATION OR ANY GUIDANCE  
ON WHY THEY RELEASED IT NOW?

A. I DONT WANT TO SPECULATE ON WHY THE SOVIET  
GOVERNMENT CHOSE TO RELEASE THE LETTER.

Q. BOB, DO I GET A FLAVOR IN HERE OF UNHAPPINESS  
THAT A PRIVATE COMMUNICATION HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND  
MORE OR LESS LEAKED?

A. ON THAT, SPENCE, LET ME JUST LEAVE IT THAT  
WE WERE SURPRISED THAT THIS PRIVATE COMMUNICATION WAS  
RELEASED.

Q. BOB, HAS THERE BEEN ANY COMMUNICATION DIRECTLY  
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS APART FROM THIS?

A. I DONT UNDERSTAND YOUR QUESTION.

Q. HAS THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATED TO  
YOU ON THIS ISSUE APART FROM THE RELEASE OF THIS LETTER  
OR THE TASS STATEMENT?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. ON THIS SUBJECT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT?

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A. YES.

Q. DO YOU SEE ANY POSSIBLE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE  
FACT THAT THIS ALL OCCURRED AFTER SENATOR JACKSON LAST  
FRIDAY, IN A VERY LENGTHY EXPLANATION OF HIS VERSION  
OF WHAT THE AMENDMENT MEANT, ASKED THAT IT BE TRANS-  
MITTED BY VOICE OF AMERICA AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY BROAD-  
CAST IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN AND SEVERAL OTHER LANGUAGES,

SATURATED THE SOVIET UNION?

I'M JUST WONDERING IF YOU DON'T THINK THE RUSSIANS  
MORE OR LESS HAD TO SAY SOMETHING.

A. WELL, HERE AGAIN, STU, YOU'RE ASKING ME TO  
SPECULATE ON WHY THE SOVIETS CHOSE TO RELEASE FOREIGN  
MINISTER GROMYKO'S LETTER. AND, AS I SAID EARLIER,  
I THINK IT'S BETTER FOR ME NOT TO SPECULATE ON THAT.

Q. BOB, REGARDING YOUR SECOND SENTENCE WHERE YOU  
SAY THERE WAS NO UNDERSTANDING OR AGREEMENT CONCERNING  
NUMBERS OF EMIGRANTS, WAS THERE AN UNDERSTANDING THAT  
THERE WOULD BE AN INCREASE, WITHOUT AN UNDERSTANDING  
ON SPECIFIC NUMBERS?

A. I THINK ON THAT I WANT TO REFER YOU BACK TO  
A WHITE HOUSE STATEMENT. AS I RECALL, IT WAS ISSUED ON  
OCTOBER 21 IN THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE IN TUCSON,  
ARIZONA. IT WAS WHEN THE PRESIDENT WAS SEEING THE  
PRESIDENT OF MEXICO. AND THAT POINT WAS ADDRESSED THERE  
ON THE NUMBERS QUESTION.

AND THE SECRETARY, AS YOU KNOW, ALSO IN HIS TESTI-  
MONY BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE WENT INTO THAT  
IN GREAT DETAIL IN HIS STATEMENT AS WELL AS IN ANSWER  
TO QUESTIONS. BUT WE HAVE THE STATEMENT HERE.

Q. IS THERE ANY QUARREL NOW, BOB, WITH  
SENATOR JACKSON'S PRESS BRIEFING AT THE WHITE HOUSE  
AFTER MEETING WITH KISSINGER AND THE PRESIDENT CONCERNING  
THE 60,000 BENCHMARK FIGURE -- I THINK IT WAS 60,000?

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A. WELL, I THINK ON THE QUESTION OF THE 60,000  
FIGURE THAT, FRANKLY, THE SECRETARY HAS EITHER ADDRESSED  
HIMSELF TO THAT QUESTION A NUMBER OF TIMES AND I THINK  
HAS MADE THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION VERY, VERY CLEAR  
ON THE QUESTION OF NUMBERS.

Q. BOB, DOES THE PUBLICATION OF THIS LETTER IN  
ANY WAY CHANGE THE SECRETARY'S OPTIMISM THAT A TRADE  
BILL WILL BE ENACTED?

A. WELL, LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY. THE SECRETARY  
AND THE ENTIRE ADMINISTRATION CERTAINLY HOPE THAT THE  
CONGRESS WILL PASS THE TRADE BILL, WHICH, AS WE ALL KNOW,  
IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECES OF  
LEGISLATION CURRENTLY BEFORE THE CONGRESS.

Q. WELL, THE SECRETARY IN HIS DECEMBER 3 APPEARANCE BEFORE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ANSWERED -- CONFIRMED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL -- THE VERY POINTS WHICH GROMYKO EXPRESSED IN THE LETTER HE HANDED TO THE SECRETARY

OCTOBER 26, CONFIRMING THE FACT THAT IF YOU ANNOUNCE AN AGREEMENT YOU WOULD BLOW THE WHOLE THING. SO I CAN'T SEE THAT IT MAKES MUCH DIFFERENCE WHETHER GROMYKO'S LETTER WAS MADE PUBLIC OR NOT. IT SIMPLY BACKS UP WHAT THE SECRETARY TOLD THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE. AND THE ATMOSPHERICS OF THE WHOLE THING HAS GONE BEYOND CREDIBILITY ANYWAY.

WHAT I AM TRYING TO SAY IS THAT EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THERE'S PROPAGANDA BACK AND FORTH BUT BENEATH IT AN UNDERSTANDING IS GOING TO BE OPERATIVE. IS THAT RIGHT -- YES, NO, OR NO COMMENT?

A. WELL, HERE AGAIN I JUST DON'T WANT TO SPECULATE AND GO MUCH BEYOND THE STATEMENT THAT WE'VE ISSUED. I THINK WHAT YOU HAVE SAID WITH REGARD TO THE SECRETARY'S DECEMBER 3 STATEMENT IS VERY ACCURATE. AND I WOULD JUST RATHER LEAVE IT THERE.

Q. BOB, CAN YOU SAY THIS? HAS THE SECRETARY  
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SINCE THIS DEVELOPMENT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH MR. DOBRYNIN? AND, SECONDLY, WAS THE GROMYKO LETTER AS HE RECEIVED IT MADE KNOWN IN FULL TO MESSRS. JACKSON, RIBICOFF, AND JAVITS?

AA. WELL, ON THE QUESTION OF THE LETTER BEING SHOWN TO THE SENATORS BEFORE IT WAS PUBLISHED, WE FELT THAT WE COULD NOT RELEASE A PRIVATE COMMUNICATION FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO THE SECRETARY. NEVERTHELESS, THE ESSENCE OF THE LETTER; I.E., OF FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO'S LETTER, WAS REFLECTED IN THE SECRETARY'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

ON YOUR FIRST QUESTION, WHICH I DID NOT ANSWER, I WOULD LIKE TO LOOK INTO THAT TO SEE WHETHER THE SECRETARY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN, AND I WILL GET BACK RIGHT AWAY.

Q. THANK YOU, ROBERT.

END TEXT KISSINGER  
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